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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SCCT-01 CU-02 /060 W

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P R 221530Z NOV 74

FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2833

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, YO

SUBJECT: TRIAL BEGINS FOR 16 IN ZADAR ACCUSED OF ORGANIZING
ANTI-REGIME GROUP

REF: ZAGREB 0933

SUMMARY: NOVEMBER 22 ZAGREB PRESS REPORTS BEGINNING OF ZADAR TRIAL FOR 16 PERSONS CHARGED WITH PLANNING CRIMINAL ACTS AGAINST YUGOSLAV PEOPLE AND STATE IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT CROATIA. THE GROUP IS ALSO ACCUSED OF MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH USTASHI AND OTHER EXTREMIST EMIGRE ORGANIZATIONS. IT ALLEGEDLY PLANNED TO EXPEL OR FORCIBLY ASSIMILATE ALL SERBS IN CROATIA AND TO INCORPORATE BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA AND OTHER PARTS OF SFRY NOW OUTSIDE CROATIA INTO NEW CROATIAN STATE. ONE DEFENDENT IS BEING TRIED IN ABSENTIA. END SUMMARY

1. ALL THREE MAJOR ZAGREB DAILIES ANNOUNCE THE BEGINNING OF TRIAL IN ZADAR FOR 16 PERSONS, WHO ALLEGEDLY FORMED TERRORIST GROUP, ENTERED INTO CONTACTS WITH USTASHI GROUPS ABROAD, AND PLOTTED TERRORIST ACTS WITH AIM OF ESTABLISHING "INDEPENDENT" STATE IN CROATIA.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS, ONE OF APPARENT LEADERS OF THE GROUP,
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ZELIMPG MESTROVIC, BEGAN HIS HOSTILE ACTIONS AS EARLY AS 1970,
WHEN HE AND ONE OTHER ACCUSED WROTE AND REPRODUCED FOUR

"HOSTILE LEAFLETS," WHICH THEY PLACED IN POST BOXES IN ZADAR. IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 1972, MESTROVIC AND FIVE OTHERS FORMED AN ORGANIZATION NAMED THE CROATIAN REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERHOOD (CRB). AFTER ITS FORMATION, THE CRB ENTERED INTO CONTACTS WITH USTASHI AND OTHER EXTREMIST POLITICAL EMIGRES. FROM 1971 TO THEIR ARREST, THE MEMBERS OF THE CRB WERE REPORTEDLY IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE "PRO-USTASHI ORGANIZATION CROATIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE (CNC) IN WEST GERMANY, FRANCE, AND CANADA, RECEIVING FROM IT MORAL SUPPORT, FINANCIAL AID, AND ARMS." DURING PRE-TRIAL DETENTION, THE ACCUSED ALLEGEDLY CONFESSED TO MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH "LEADERS OF USTASHI ORGANIZATIONS ABROAD WHO, IT IS KNOWN, ARE ALSO REPRESENTATIVES (EXPONENTI) OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES."

3. MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ALLEGEDLY MET IN BOTH ZADAR AND IN ZAGREB, WHERE THEY PLANNED A WIDE VARIETY OF TERRORIST ACTIONS INCLUDING MINING BRIDGES AND ROADS, ATTACKING HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANTS, ATTACKING THE BUILDING OF THE ZADAR PUBLIC SECURITY SERVICE, ASSASSINATING LEADERS OF THE SRH, BOMBING THE CROATIAN ASSEMBLY BUILDING, HIJACKING PASSENGER AIRCRAFT, AND KIDNAPPING CHILDREN FOR RANSOM. ADDITIONALLY, SOME MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WORKED OUT A PLAN OF ARMED ATTACKS IN WHICH THEY HOPED 2000 PERSONS WOULD PARTICIPATE. THE ACCUSED TERRORISTS BELIEVED THAT THEIR "ACTION WOULD TURN INTO AN ARMED UPRISING AND ALSO EXPECTED THE SUPPORT OF REACTIONARY FORCES FROM ABROAD." IN ADDITION, THE TERRORISTS ARE ACCUSED OF IMPORTING AND DISTRIBUTING HOSTILE PROPAGANDA AND FOR SCRAWLING HOSTILE SLOGANS AT THE PHILOSOPHICAL FACULTY IN ZADAR. APPARENTLY THE ONLY "TERRORIST" ACT WHICH THE GROUP ACTUALLY CARRIED OUT WAS SETTING FIRE TO A PINE FOREST IN BORIK.

4. IN JUNE 1973, THE GROUP REPORTEDLY DECIDED TO FORM A "TEMPORARY CROATIAN GOVERNMENT." THE GROUP ALSO DECIDED THAT AFTER TAKING POWER THEY WOULD "EXPEL OR FORCIBLY ASSIMILATE ALL SERBS, AND IN THEIR PLACE RESETTLE MOSLEMS AND OTHERS FROM BOSNIA. ALLEGEDLY, THE GROUP ALSO PONDERED THE "EVICION FROM CROATIA OF ALL PEOPLES WHO HAVE SETTLED (HERE) SINCE 1918." IN ITS "INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA" THE GROUP ALLEGEDLY INTENDED TO SEPARATE FROM THE SFRJ PARTS OF THE SREM UP TO SEMUN, BOKA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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KOTORSKA, AND ALL OF BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA.

5. "VJESNIK" REPORTS THAT TWO MEMBERS OF THE GROUP HAVE ALREADY BEEN SENTENCED TO A TEMPORARY TERM OF STRICT IMPRISONMENT, FOR UNSPECIFIED REASONS. ONE OF THE ACCUSED, PAVLE PEROVIC, IS BEING TRIED IN ABSENTIA, BECAUSE HE ESCAPED ABROAD BEFORE HE COULD BE ARRESTED. DEFENSE ATTORNEYS UNSUCCESSFULLY DEMANDED THAT TWO JUDGES AND A DEPUTY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR BE REMOVED FROM THE CASE.

6. FOLLOWING IS PRESS LIST OF DEFENDANTS IN TRIAL:

ZELIMIR MESTROVIC, 49, PROFESSOR FROM ZADAR
JOSIP BILUSIC, 29, STUDENT FROM LJUBOTICA
MARKO DIZDAR, 23, STUDENT FROM DRNIS REGION
DAVOR ARAS, 41, PROFESSOR FROM ZADAR
PETAR VULETA, STUDENT FROM SINJ REGION
ANTE STIPANIC, 46, PENSIONER FROM ZADAR
ANTE BURIC, 44, PRIVATE INNKEEPER FROM ZAGREB
STJEPAN JANKOVIC, 56, PRIVATE INNKEEPER FROM ZAGREB
ILJA BARJASIC, 29, PRIVATE INKEEPER FROM ZADAR
FRANE DEVIC, 50, PROFESSOR FROM ZADAR
ANTE PERICA, 48, TUTOR FROM ZADAR
PETAR SALE, 27, STUDENT FROM ZAGREB
MATE KUTLESA, 27, STUDENT FROM IMOTSKI REGION
PAVLE PEROVIC, 22, STUDENT FROM ZADAR (BEING TRIED IN ABSENTIA)
VLADO BILUSIC, 26, CONSTRUCTION TECHNICIAN FROM DUGA RESA
IVAN POSAVEC, 22, HOTEL WORKER FROM BJELOVAR REGION

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH TRIAL IS UNDOUBTEDLY BEING WIDELY DIS-
CUSSED, LIFE IN ZAGREB PROCEEDS NORMALLY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PRESS COMMENTS, TERRORISTS, TREASON TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ZAGREB01060
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740340-0473
From: ZAGREB
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741118/aaaaaouc.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ZAGREB 0933
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUL 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <24 MAR 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRIAL BEGINS FOR 16 IN ZADAR ACCUSED OF ORGANIZING ANTI-REGIME GROUP
TAGS: PINS, YO, CROATIAN REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERHOOD, CRB
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005